

Fund will help send children to camp

County officials praised for spending reduction

By MAC CORDELL
The Union County Commissioners have expressed their gratitude to office holders and department heads in the county for helping the financial picture.

"I think everyone deserves a great deal of credit for how hard you worked to keep spending in line," commissioner Gary Lee said at a recent county staff meeting. "It speaks very highly of not only all of you, but of your staffs, and how hard they've worked."

The commissioners asked office holders to reduce their 2012 requests to a level 12 percent below actual 2010 expenses.

Actual expenses in 2010 were about \$17.16 million. The final approved budget for this year calls for expenses of \$16,115,548. Revenue for 2012 is projected between \$16.1 million and \$16.6 million.

The commissioners have said the county must reduce general fund spending by about \$2 million below 2011 spending levels. The commissioners have blamed the cuts on the loss of both tangible personal property tax reimbursements and local government funding as part of the state budget.

Some offices were not required to set funding 12 percent below 2011 levels.

"If they found additional revenue to offset costs we

By RYAN HORNS

A large financial donation to the Union County Foundation has a deeper meaning for one local family.

UCF executive director Dave Vollrath said a family with strong local ties recently distributed a sum of money "approaching a half million dollars" in order to establish the Kathryn I. Marsh-Coleman and James H. Coleman Memorial Scholarship Fund for handicapped/disabled children. The original trust document that provides for the new fund was drafted by Huntington National Bank.

The point behind the donation all started with the Coleman family's son, James who was mentally impaired.

Family friend Wilma Miller said that James always had a dream to go to summer camp, but ultimately his physical and mental limitations prevented him from fulfilling that dream.

"He was not really severely handicapped," she said, "but he could not live alone."

She said he worked at U-CO Industries in Marysville from 2003 until he passed away in 2010.

Miller said the concept for the scholarship fund really started because her friend Kathryn lived on a farm and felt the land might be a great opportunity to create something her son could enjoy without leaving home.

"At one time she talked about making use of it as a summer camp," Miller said about the land. "I always thought it was interesting that this was her wish."
Kathryn and



Local mentally and physically handicapped children under the age of 18 may have a chance to afford summer camp now that the Kathryn I. Marsh-Coleman and James H. Coleman Memorial Scholarship Fund will make it possible through the Union County Foundation. Picture from left, foundation director Dave Vollrath accepts a check from Coleman family friend Wilma Miller in the office of local attorney Robert Parrott.

(Journal-Tribune photo by Ryan Horns)

her husband Fred Coleman ultimately moved to Arizona, Miller said, before the summer camp concept could become a reality. But after Fred died, Kathryn and her son ended up moving back to Union County in 1990. Kathryn later died in 2004.

When her son James died in 2010 the farm was ultimately sold, with the proceeds underwriting the new scholarship fund.

Miller said its formation will now help realize both Kathryn and James' dreams, ensuring other children don't lose out on their time to enjoy summer camp like others their age - especially if the cost is the only thing standing in their way.

Vollrath said he cannot list the exact amount of the funding yet, because the bequest is still subject to some estate settling expenses, but said the scholarship will help ensure Union County children, under the age of 18, who suffer from mental or physical disabilities, will have the financial support to go to

summer camp if they want to go.

Miller said the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities has told her that eight to 10 local children typically go to summer camp every year. She said the point is now to make sure those disabled children who never went because they could not afford it may come forward and take advantage of the fund as well.

Whether it is the large recent support for the Union County Care Train or the United Way Community Care Day, local families less affected by the ongoing recession have continually stepped to help others.

Vollrath said the creation of the Kathryn I. Marsh-Coleman and James H. Coleman Memorial Scholarship Fund for handicapped/disabled children represents another in a long line of local families making it possible for those less fortunate to fulfill their goals in life. He said a total of 80 charitable funds are housed at the Union County Foundation and approximately two dozen of those were established in the last 24 months alone.

"We're hoping that in 2012 we will now be able to start sending some young people to summer camp," he said.



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